QUALITY FRAME-WORK FOR YOUTH WORK TRAININGS

A Set of Quality Indicators for Course Providers in Youth Work

This
brochure provides
an introduction to
the Quality Framework
within the Erasmus+ project
„Blockchained Youth Work".
The following describes how the
Framework was created, how it
is structured and how it can be
applied in practice within the
project's life cycle and
beyond. In addition, a self
evaluation tool for course
providers in youth work
is included.

CONTENTS

HOW WAS THIS QUALITY FRAME-WORK DEVELOPED?

The development began with extensive research work. We gathered information from youth organisations, looked at different course programmes and at existing quality standards. We interviewed people with different expertise and backgrounds to gather input from both youth work and related areas like social work, education or the general labour market.

Based on the described educational practices, the needs analysis and the input of experts and practitioners we developed quality parameters for qualification and curricula developers in youth work. These quality parameters also cover requirements of further work packages e.g. the pilot phase of the blockchain project.
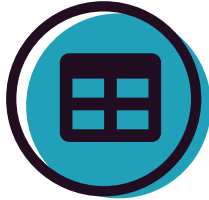
HOW IS THIS QUALITY FRAME-WORK STRUCTURED?

The Quality Framework is divided into four content areas. These describe the overall course design and didactical objectives, the practical relevance and how well the training meets the target group's needs, general conditions and course organisation and the process of issuing diplomas and certificates. Each of the areas contains several quality parameters that set a standard for training courses in youth work. These are considered the highest quality currently found in youth work training according to the research conducted and the experts' interviews.

HOW CAN THIS QUALITY FRAME-WORK BE APPLIED?

Apart from being a training standard for courses, the quality framework can be used as a resource for new and further development of educational programmes. The content can also used to create job profiles, job postings and self-assessment tools.

Youth work facilities wanting to hire someone new can use the quality framework to create a qualification profile that matches what they are looking for in a new employee. Youth workers can use the quality framework to evaluate the quality of courses or as a tool to plan their professional training and further development.

The quality framework can serve as a translation tool in communication with sponsors and other stakeholders to explain the activities and trainings in the field of youth work to make the high quality standards visible.

These parameters are applicable to both formal and non-formal trainings. The quality of a course programme is not exclusively dependent on meeting each specific standard. The educational landscape in youth work shows an enormous level of variety. Quality parameters should reflect this diversity. The quality of a youth work training should be assessed by a combination of characteristics. Failing to meet some of them does not automatically indicate low quality.

QUALITY
PARAMETERS

- • Educational-Didactical Concept and Course Design
- • Learner-centred Design and Practical Relevance
- • General Conditions
- • Certification and Diplomas

EDUCATIONAL-DIDACTICAL CONCEPT AND COURSE DESIGN

COURSE DESIGN

This standard deals with the overall obejective and the educational and didactic elements of the programme. In other words: How likely is it that learners achieve the expected goals in the given time in that specific learning scenario.

The training has a clear educational objective and a corresponding pedagogical-didactic concept. Admission requirements, study time, learning level and learning outcomes result in a well balanced overall picture.

STUDY TIME

This standard sets a minimum time frame for course programmes covered by this quality framework. This is due to the assumption that shorter courses are more likely to fail to meet most of the other standards.

The average study time/work load matches with the admission requirements, the prior knowledge, the educational goals and the learning outcomes. For the course of this project, the minimum study time should be a 2 ECTS points equivalent.

TIME MANAGEMENT

Meeting this standard shows that the time management of the course is focused on the needs of learners rather than on the needs of the organizers. It ensures that learners have enoguh time to reach the educatinoal gaols in their individual time frame.

The available time is adequately structured and corresponds with the didactic design and the educational concept. Learners have enough time to comprehend course content and transfer it into practice. Consideration is given to breaks during the course as well as to part-time students.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This standard makes sure that learners know right away what gain of knowledge and skills they are expected to have during the course programme. Learning outcomes also clearly show third parties (like employers of funding agencies) what graduates know or are able to do. The number of learning outcomes is referring to the number required by the European Qualification Framework.

10 to 15 learning outcomes outline what graduates know, understand and are able to do by the end of the course. Learning outcomes are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART).

VARIETY OF METHODS

This standard checks how innovative the learning scenario is and if the organizers and trainers are able to reach out to different learning types.

A variety of pedagogical and didactic methods are used in the course. Teaching methods are progressive and innovative to meet with different types of learners.

ASSESSMENT

Making sure that learners proved that they have reached the learning outcomes, both by self evaluation and by testing through someone else helps building a positive reputation for the training programme. The methods used for assessment can vary and include discussion groups, activity planning or presentations.

The achievement of learning outcomes is assessed by using a transparent system. This includes the use of methods of both self-perception (through reflection, learning diary, etc.) as well as the evaluation by trainers (through observation, tests, etc.).

QUALITY OF CONTENTS

With this standard, the course provider ensures the quality of the course content. This includes materials, activities and background information. According to this standard, the course content must follow current pedagogical standards and show their practical relevance.

The content, topics and the course materials correspond to current professional standards and developments throughout the course. The course providers implemented an evaluation system that ensures that the course contents stay state-of-the-art.

LEARNER-CENTRED DESIGN AND PRACTICAL RELEVANCE

INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Modern course design should – to a certain extent – offer the possibility to take responsibility of one own's education and to acquire knowledge and skills outside the traditional classroom structure. The course design should empower individuals to explore diverse resources and go deeper into specific areas or fill in educational gaps.

The course intends for phases of independent learning and self-study. An (online) storage location of course materials offers learners the possibility to access diverse subjects and to find their individual learning path and pace.

TRANSFER INTO PRACTICE

This standard ensures the application of acquired knowledge and skills in real-world situations. It involves seamlessly integrating the lessons learned during training into one's daily activities, fostering a practical and effective implementation of new capabilities.

As part of the didactic design the course offers enough time to transfer newly gained knowledge and presented methods into practice. As part of the course, the transfer into practice is evaluated by the participants aka youth workers. In this way, feedback is also obtained indirectly from within the youth work organisations the participants work at.

LEARNERS-ORIENTATION

Learner-oriented training programs prioritize individual needs and preferences, tailoring content and delivery methods to engage participants actively in the learning process. The educators should create a supportive and interactive environment that empowers learners to bring in their individual experiences.

The course design is aware of the needs of individual learning experiences. It ensures that content and activities can be adapted to individual learning styles and preferences. Despite having different educational and professional backgrounds the participants are able to engage with the course's topics and themes. The learner's experience in the field of Youth Work complements the content provided by the course.

TAILORED TO THE TARGET GROUP

Youth Workers can be a demanding target group. Their knowledge in participation, volunteering and pedagogy will put both the course provider and the trainers up with the challenging task of offering an engaging didactic design while including a practical approach for both professional and volunteering youth workers.

The course is tailored towards the needs of full-time and voluntary youth workers and integrates the unique challenges and objectives of this target group. Special emphasis is put on the incorporation of content and methodologies that are crucial for the field of Youth Work as well as a learning setting that offers interactive and participatory activities.

TRANSPARENCY

Transparency in regards to youth work trainings involves openly sharing information about program objectives, methodologies, and outcomes, providing participants with clear insights into the learning process and enabling them to make informed decisions about their educational journey.

Communication is transparent and on equal terms. This applies to the admission procedures, the communication between trainers and participants, the assessment, appeals and complaints as well as issuing of diplomas.

COMPREHENSIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

This standard ensures that the educational content is easily understandable and available to diverse participants. This includes implementing clear communication and removing barriers to entry and to access the course materials.

The documents relevant to the course (website, registration documents, course materials, learning platform, etc.) are made available to the participants at no additional cost, are written in a type of language that the participants can easily understand and fulfill accessibility requirements (e.g. WCAG).

CONTINUITY TO THE LABOUR MARKET

This standard makes sure that curricula are aligned with youth work needs to enhance participants' employability and smooth integration into existing teams. Course providers are encouraged to bridge the gap between education and practice by providing relevant, up-to-date skills, fostering a seamless transition from learning environments to professional roles.

The course content and its diplomas/ certificates allow the continuity to further educational programmes and are tailored to the work requirements of the field of Youth Work as well as the labour market of various employers.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Admission requirements in educational trainings serve as criteria to assess applicants' eligibility for a particular program. These criteria may include academic qualifications, work experience, standardized test scores, or other specific prerequisites including an evaluation process, ensuring that participants possess the foundational knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in the training.

The admission/entry requirements are designed so that participants can follow the course content and achieve the learning outcomes in the designated time of study. The selection process is well-defined and laid out openly.

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND EVALUATION

This standard ensures that assessment methodologies and continuous feedback mechanisms are employed to monitor the delivery of content, measure participant outcomes, and make adjustments, ultimately upholding the standard of education and further enhance it.

The education provider offers an established system of quality assurance for its course which is applied from the provider itself or externally. Evaluation takes place at the level of trainers, participants and the provider itself and is aligned with the course objectives.

CONTENT REVIEW

This standards stands for an established procedure within the course lifespan to continuously evaluate the relevance of course material and the soundness of the overall material concept.

The course materials comply with the professional standards of Youth Work and current developments in the field. The evaluation concept ensures the course content is regularly reviewed and updated.

COURSE ORGANISATION

This standard involves creating a learning scenario in a logical and pedagogically sound manner to facilitate optimal learning. It includes the planning of lectures, activities, assessments, and resources, as well as overall project management and accounting.

The administrative organisation of the course is customized to the course contents, the educational objectives, the pedagogical-didactic concept and the learning outcomes. The cost calculation is conclusive and the participation fees are in line with those customary in the field.

QUALIFICATION OF TRAINERS

This standard checks if the course provider has a functioning system to make sure trainers have relevant expertise in the subject matter, effective communication skills, and a deep understanding of pedagogical methods. Well-qualified trainers inspire and engage participants, contributing significantly to the overall success and impact of the educational program.

Trainers have specialised qualifications and relevant training experience. They are acquainted with the pedagogical-didactic concept and are trained in the implementation of the assessment process.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

Course programme providers in youth work should foster inclusive and equitable learning environments. The training should promote diversity, also by implementing anti-discriminatory measures itself.

Communication, course materials, course activities, the admission and the assessment process are not discriminating and follow the principles of inclusion. The course and the people involved are committed to gender-sensitive and non-violent language.

GREEN CURRICULUM AND SUSTAINABILITY

This standard encourages course providers to include measures of environmental sustainability into their course organisation, such as minimizing paper usage, utilizing digital resources, and reducing energy consumption or traveling.

The course is designed to save resources, use them sustainably and to incorporate environmentally and socially responsible practices. Face-to-face events and trainings are based on the standards for green events (e.g. travel arrangements, re-use of learning materials, food etc.). Where applicable, digital learning settings are used to avoid travel costs.

CERTIFICATION
AND DIPLOMAS

DESCRIPTION OF COMPETENCES

This standard deals with clearly articulating the knowledge, skills, and attitudes participants are expected to acquire during the trainin. Detailed competency descriptions contribute to the effectiveness of training programs by facilitating the learners' understanding and the assessment, but also gives companies and organisations outside youth work a better understanding of what they can expect from graduates.

The certificate describes skills, knowledge and competences acquired during the course programme in detail. These descriptions are comprehensible for people working outside of youth work.

STUDY TIME

Course providers should design their diplomas in a way that clearly states how much time the learners spent on the training while also highlighting how much time they spent on individual topics. Following the overall requirement of practical relevance, diplomas have to show duration of practical appliance of new skills and knowledge.

The certificate shows the overall study time as well as the time spent during the practical implementation or time spent self-studying.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment procedures in educational trainings should be designed to evaluate the participants' comprehension, application, and retention of the content. Outlining a well-designed assessment in diplomas will also lead to a better understanding and reputation of the course programme in other course providers and employers.

The certificate describes the principles of the assessment process to achieve the designated learning outcomes. It states the methods and mode of the assessment process and lists its final result as well as the scope, core content and/or title of final theses, projects and tests.

PERMANENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Loosing proof that one went through a specific training can be devastating for the career. This standards ensures that course providers permanently keep track of essential elements of the course and link them to individuals that participated in it and proof this to others when requested to do so.

The content of the diplomas (name of the graduate, learning time, learning outcomes, year, etc.) is stored permanently, securely and is regularly backed up.

AVAILABILITY

This standard ensures that third parties as well as the learners themselves permanently have access to key elements of the diplomas and that course providers issue them in a format that can be accessed by other course providers, academia and employers at any given time.

The diplomas are accessible permanently. They are available in an up-to-date data system. In the event of system changes, it is ensured that the diplomas remain available and accessible.

INTEGRITY

This standards helps raising trust and reputation of the issued diplomas from a technical perspective. Different methods come in mind to ensure that diplomas are unaltered, such as digital certificates or blockchain application.

The participant's attendance throughout the course is traceable and secure against forgery from admission to graduation. This applies especially to the core elements of the diplomas such as the participant's name and the learning outcomes.

TRUST AND RECOGNITION IN THE FIELD

This standards makes sure that course providers come up with measure to build trust and recognition in the field complementing the technological measures taken. This includes networking or relying on external quality control.

Special measures and procedures are mapped out and implemented to increase recognition of qualifications in the field of youth work and beyond. These may include external certification procedures, the cooperation with other educational institutions or the collaboration with youth organisations and/or employers.

BLOCKCHAINED YOUTH WORK

validation

recognition

quality

supply